story will be finished as one "great central guard and inspection room," reaching from the ceiling of the first story up to the roof of the building; this room will measure 70 feet square, and will contain the galleries and staircases connected with the galleries around the outside of the cells in the three wings.

All the areas around the outside of the cells of the north, south, and east wings will receive light from the great windows in the exterior walls of the wings; these windows will be thirty in number, each measuring 10 feet in width, and 33 feet in height, beneath which other windows, 10 feet wide and 9 feet in height, will be placed, thus yielding an amount of light to the interior of the cells probably four times as great as that in any prison yet constructed upon the Auburn system.

The cost of this prison is estimated at 150,000 dollars, but, according to our informant, it will probably cost *three* times that amount.

THE CHARGES OF THE ELECTRO-TELEGRAPHIC COMPANY.

WE have received a letter from Mr. J. Lewis Ricardo, M.P., chairman of the Electric Telegraph Company, calling our attention to a paragraph of our own regarding the telegraphed report of the Cobden banquet at Wakefield, wherein, after doing justice to the expedition with which that first and only great effort in this country was accomplished, we expressed a hope, "that the only drag upon the lightning speed of the electric telegraph that now remains, viz., extravagant and impracticable charges, will ere long be cast off as an incubus that can no more profit the conveyancers of intelligence than its publishers." Mr. Ricardo enters into a lengthened and interesting explanation of the heavy outlay and expense attendant on the construction and maintenance of the extensive apparatus and property of his company: an explanation we would the more regret our inability to offer in full, were it not that the same explanation has already appeared in the *Times*, and more or less fully in other papers, through which our paragraph had previously circulated. Of course Mr. Ricardo's object is to shew that, every thing considered, the company's charges are moderate, and that therefore our accusation is unjust and unmerited. "As I am quite satisfied," he says, however, "that you had none but public motives in the charge made against us, I am anxious to set ourselves right with you, and through you with the public, on a charge which is calculated to do serious damage to our undertaking, the importance of which you have fully and handsomely acknowledged."

We should be exceedingly sorry indeed to do even the slightest damage to so important and almost national an undertaking. Our sincere intention, on the contrary, was to do good service to the company no less than to the public, and it still remains to be seen, whether a very considerable reduction of the present charges for the conveyance of intelligence,—even of mere messages, though we principally alluded to such lengthened reports as that to which we had just referred,—would not very considerably increase the company's profits, even while additionally benefiting the public. Mr. Ricardo himself, while limiting the very design or purpose of the telegraphic system at large to *important and urgent messages*—thus plainly shewing that the eyes of the company are not even yet opened to those wider and more extensive purposes recently displayed in their own striking and meritorious achievement for the *Times*,—admits that "many of our wires are in far from complete and continuous employment." Why should this be still the case, if the charges, even for messages, be not to a greater or lesser extent impracticable? Nay, why should the company calculate their charges by any exclusive reference to *urgent* or even *important* messages atall? It is certain, that *so* long as the charges are so estimated, messages of a less urgent or a less important nature *will* be permanently excluded. Does not the very fact that many of their wires, even though only capable of conveying a certain more or less limited number of messages in a given time, are in far from complete and continuous employment, clearly prove that the company pitch their charges at too high a figure for those less urgent or less important messages, which otherwise *would* keep their wires in complete and continuous employment? Ay, and in all probability, call for duplicates, triplicates, or manifold repetitions of separate sets of many of them for separate and simultaneous purposes? It is not such mere "statements" as ours alone that may "have the effect of preventing the public from making the full use of the telegraphic accommodation provided for them," or be calculated to "impede an extension of that accommodation;" and the company may depend on it that the initiative in "diminishing the cost at which it is provided" rests, not with the public who do not fully patronise their wires, but with themselves, who do not afford them a sufficient temptation to do so.

In allusion to the magnitude and expense of the establishment,* the numerous staff of clerks, mechanics, batterymen, and higher officials, kept up, the tear and wear, improvements, substitutions, &c., continually going on, Mr. Ricardo says, if these things be considered—

"I submit that a maximum charge for a message amounting to 1d. per mile cannot fairly be considered as an exorbitant demand for the accommodation afforded to the public in keeping open so many receiving stations, and the maintenance of the expensive establishment to which I have adverted. The telegraphic system is designed for important and urgent messages, and could I violate the secrecy which I feel bound strictly to observe, I could show that not one despatch in a hundred has been forwarded which has not been worth many times the amount paid for it by the sender. A commercial house at Liverpool will scarcely grudge 8s. 6d. for a communication by which a necessary payment may be made, an important order given, or a profitable operation facilitated in London; and the message from Glasgow, which traverses a distance of 520 miles in an instant, to summon a son from the metropolis to the bed-side of a dying parent is scarcely to be judged overpaid at a charge of 14s.—considerably less than a halfpenny per mile. An express message, sent by porters or by a cab from the city to the west end of the town, say from this office to the House of Commons, a distance of four miles, will cost 2s. 6d.; and if the same message can be sent from Manchester to Liverpool, a distance of thirty miles, for the same sum, and in a shorter time, it cannot surely be deemed an extravagant demand."

Now, over and above what we have already said as to the design or purpose to which the Electric Telegraph Company seem to desire to limit their ramifications throughout the country, it appears to us that they are not very much entitled to compare or contrast their charges in this way. What would they say to such an argument as this, by way of contrast, against themselves?—Your charges are exorbitant, for while you are exacting 1d. per mile for the mere conveyance of twenty words through a wire not a quarter of an inch in diameter, railway companies are conveying passengers themselves, even though they be 20 stone weight, at that very charge, and even at considerably less, in heavy and expensive carriages, and by steam-power, along a vastly more expensive line of massive rails, and levelled, tunnelled, bridged, embanked, and stationed and officialed railways: and this they do, however urgent and important the object may be which the passenger has in view, or however much he may benefit by his journey! But let us see what they do say at Liverpool to all this special pleading of our correspondent.

"Several Liverpool merchants on 'Change," says the *European Times*, "called our attention to a letter in the *Times* of yesterday from Mr. J. L. Ricardo, chairman of the Electric Telegraph Company, upon which we would at present merely remark that it is not surprising that the electric telegraph is but little used in England, when the company demanded, on the 26th inst., 13s.! for transmitting from London to Liverpool the following short message:—

Lil. Hi. Db. Sixty-eight half Nine-fourth.
E. Ayax. O. G. S. T. Three-ten.

Only forty-eight letters. And at this exorbitant rate they say they do not guarantee the correct transmission of a message unless paid for as a "repeated message;" so that under that infliction the public would have been mulcted of 21s. for sending forty-eight letters. See how the thing is done in America. We lately sent a message of greater length from New York to New Orleans and back, about 4,000 miles, for 8s., and it was accomplished in 70 minutes. Here is another fact. We had, on the same day, a message, containing more than forty-eight letters, sent from Philadelphia to New York. On its delivery we paid one shilling for its transmission, and (one penny) for delivery. In these two American messages there was not a single mistake!* As this is a subject of great public interest, we will prepare and publish a full statement of our business with this company for the 117 days of this year."

But, again, we must remark, that our allusion to impracticable prices bore direct reference to the charges made to newspaper proprietors for the conveyance of general intelligence in such reports as that which appeared, we may say, for the first and only time in this country. And it is a remarkable circumstance that in so elaborate a reply to so incidental an allusion, not one word relates to this our real complaint against the company. Charges of one halfpenny, or even one penny per mile, for a message of twenty words, *might*, after all, be unobjectionable, though even these, it appears, ought to have come within the sweep of our denunciation of extravagant and impracticable prices; but, even otherwise, such charges, for every twenty words, in a long report of a meeting, must be preposterous, even were they moderate for mere brief messages of urgency and importance. It cannot be denied that the first announcement of their charges by the Telegraph Company completely damped the hopeful prospect of mutual benefits in constant intercourse between these conveyancers of intelligence and its publishers, and pre-determined the latter against the former altogether. Thus it seems to be that the promotion of public and general intelligence of more or less importance, by newspaper report, is not even comprehended in the category of the purposes or design of the telegraphic system at all,—whereas, until it be so, and until temptations in the shape of considerable reductions in charge be offered to the public and the press itself, to transmit intelligence of second, third, or even fourth-rate, far less of first-rate, importance or urgency, we do fear that there will be no such profitable return as we would desire to see reaped in so spirited and large an undertaking as was the establishment of the Electro-telegraphic Company.

THE NEW DOCK AND WHARVES CONSTRUCTING AT GREAT GRIMSBY.

THE plan of these works includes an entrance basin, area 19 acres, accessible for the largest vessels at all times of the tide, with piers suitable for all vessels not requiring to enter the docks. The great lock is 300 feet long, and 65 feet wide. The small lock 200 feet long, and 45 feet wide. The dock, area 29 acres, is accessible for all vessels for twenty hours out of the twenty-four. The east wharf is 2,000 feet long, and 670 feet wide, to be appropriated to warehouses and a goods station, with railways laid to every part, area 42 acres.

Great Grimsby has every prospect of becoming a very important harbour and port, and when

* We may here give a summary of this part of Mr. Ricardo's letter. The wires of the company stretch from Glasgow on the north to Dorchester on the south, from the east coast at Yarmouth to the west at Liverpool. They have brought upwards of 150 towns into instant communication with each other. Besides a central office in Lothbury, and five branch receiving-houses in various parts of the metropolis, from the main station at Lothbury their wires (carried at great cost in iron pipes under the streets) diverge to every town of importance in the country. In the metropolis alone they have upwards of sixty persons in their employment, and at each of their country stations they have, independently of messengers, not less than two, and in many cases as many as ten, signal clerks, all of them skilled in manipulating and interpreting the telegraph. The wires which they have set up for the use of the public alone are upwards of 9,500 miles in length, and extend over a distance of 2,060 miles, and, exclusive of those running under ground and through tunnels or rivers, are stretched on no less than 61,900 posts, varying from 16 feet to 30 feet in height, and of an average square of eight inches, with an expensive apparatus of insulators and winders attached to each.

* Here we must observe that the Americans might have urged the very argument adduced by Mr. Ricardo in favour of his higher charges. Yet no one can doubt brother Jonathan's perfect competency to mind the main chance. Some further illustrations of the contrast between American and English charges are given in the *Times*.—Messages of ten words or under are as follows:—from New York to Boston, 50c.; New York to Philadelphia, 25c.; Baltimore to Washington, 10c.; Washington to New Orleans, 150c.; Baltimore to Cincinnati, 90c.; Baltimore to St. Louis, 135c.; Baltimore to Philadelphia, 25c.; and from Philadelphia to Washington, 30c. From New York to Boston the distance is 200 miles, for which the charge is 2s. (English). For every additional word 1d. is charged, *and with these remarkably low prices the company makes a good profit, because the public continually use this wonderful medium of communication.*" And why do they so use it, but *because* the prices *are* so low?

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